

Borough of Appleby

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1955

LIVERPOOL

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1956

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Appleby.

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report upon the health of the Borough during the year 1955.

Beneath the shadow of thermonuclear clouds, the pessimists amongst us brood on cigarettes and diesel fumes producing cancer, and the ever-mounting cost of Britain's fairytale health service.

But the optimists see the recent victories of medicine, the opportunities for prevention, the way to a future which we believe will exist. One has to choose between mud and stars.

I wish to acknowledge the help and ready co-operation of my colleague, the County Medical Officer of Health, and also the assistance afforded to me by the local general medical practitioners.

I am indebted also to the Sanitary Inspector and his staff for the spirit of teamwork which exists in my department, and for the fund of local knowledge which they have laid at my disposal.

I have the honour to be,

Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant.

FRANK T. MADGE,

Medical Officer of Health.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area of the Borough in acres	...	...	...	...	1,877
Population (Registrar-General's mid year estimate)	...	...	...	...	1,700
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	538
Rateable Value—old valuation	...	...	...	...	£11,070
—new valuation	...	...	...	...	£17,328
Product of a Penny Rate—old valuation	...	...	...	...	£44
—new valuation	...	...	...	...	£68
Rate in the pound levied in 1955-6 on old valuation	...	...	...	...	25/-
of which the County Rate was	...	...	...	...	19/10

The ancient Borough of Appleby is the County Town of Westmorland, and lies on a beautiful winding reach of the River Eden beneath the long escarpment of the Pennine Range. The Town clusters compactly on the rising ground of the river banks and is dominated by the historic Castle. It is a small market town which mainly serves the surrounding farming countryside, but on one side the main trunk highway follows the old Roman road which passes over into north-east England. These geographical features determine the natural lines of communication and therefore influence the spread of infectious disease.

The geology of the Borough is mainly Penrith sandstone in the Permian System but in the northern portion there are some purple sandstones and shales in the Millstone Grit series of the Carboniferous System, with alluvial deposits and terraces along the river, and some glacial drift. These geological characteristics are of great significance in the supervision of water supplies and sewerage as well as affecting the economics of the Borough.

The climate is equable and the town is well sheltered from the prevailing winds. The air is generally very clear and there is little mist or fog. The rainfall varies between 30 and 40 inches a year, and snow may be expected for one or two weeks in the late winter.

The Borough is primarily a market town in character, and many of the small industries and crafts are ancillary to agriculture. There are also the following industries and occupations which provide local employment and bring a measure of prosperity to the Borough :—

Egg Packing Station
Milk Depot
Railway Work.

In addition to these local industries the Borough receives seasonal tourist and business traffic from the Trunk Road. The variety of these local opportunities for employment has kept Appleby happily free from unemployment and has provided that economic security which is a most important factor in the maintenance of the public health.

STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office.	Whole or Part-time.	Other Offices.
F. T. Madge.	M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health.	Part.	M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland
T. H. Owens.	M.S.I.A.	Sanitary Inspector	Part.	—
B. M. Machell.	—	Clerk to Medical Officer of Health.	Part.	Clerk to M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland

Mr. Owens is engaged on a part-time basis of six sessions per week as the small size of the Borough does not justify a full-time appointment. There were no staff changes during the year.

COMMITTEES.

The Minister of Health requires me to include a list of your Council's Committees which are concerned with matters of public health.

The Health and Highways Committees deal with the principal matters, but there are other aspects of public health importance which are dealt with by the Properties, and Planning and Development Committees.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The following extracts are made from information supplied by the Registrar-General, with figures for 1954 for comparison:—

Area of the District in acres 1,877

					1954	1955
Estimated resident population (mid-year)	...				1,700	1,700
Live Births. Legitimate—	males	...	...		8	8
	females	...	...		9	11
Illegitimate—	males	...	...		1	—
	females	...	...		1	1
Total	...	...	...		19	20
Crude Rate per 1,000 population	...				11.2	11.8
Corrected Rate per 1,000 population	...				12.09	12.7
Rate for England and Wales	...				15.2	15.1
Still Births. Legitimate—	males	...	...		1	—
	females	...	...		—	1
Illegitimate—	males	...	...		—	—
	females	...	...		—	—
Total	...	...	...		1	1
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still)						
births	...	...	...	...	50	47.6
Rate for England and Wales	...				24	23.1
Deaths. Males	...	...	...	...	7	11
Females	...	...	...	...	16	12
Total	...	...	...	...	23	23
Crude Rate per 1,000 population	...				13.5	13.5
Corrected Rate per 1,000 population	...				11.7	11.7
Rate for England and Wales	...				11.3	11.7

		1954	1955
Infantile Deaths (under 1 year)			
Legitimate	...	—	1
Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	—	52·6
Illegitimate	...	1	—
Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	500	—	
Total Deaths under 1 year	...	1	1
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	52·6	50
Rate for England and Wales	...	25·5	24·9
Neonatal Deaths (under 1 month)			
Total Neonatal Deaths	...	1	1
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	52·6	50
Neonatal Rate, England and Wales	...	—	17·3
Maternal Mortality			
Deaths	...	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	...	—	—
Rate for England and Wales	...	0·69	0·64

Deaths from certain causes :—	1954	1955
Cancer	...	1
Measles	...	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	Nil

The main causes of death were :—

Heart Disease	—	}
Vascular lesions of nervous system	—	

On account of the small population of the Borough the changes from last year's figures have little statistical significance.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 145-170.

National Health Service Act, 1946, Part III.

There were a few cases of measles during the first quarter of the year, associated with a general epidemic in the Eden Valley. The remainder of the year was almost clear of notifiable diseases.

Hospital and Ambulance Arrangements for Infectious Diseases.

National Health Service Act, 1946. Parts II and III.

The Regional Hospital Board, Newcastle, provides infectious diseases hospitals at Penrith and Carlisle to serve the area, and ambulance transport is provided by the County Council. Disinfection of premises is carried out by your Sanitary Inspector.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES TABLE.

Ages	DISEASES		Total
	Measles	Whooping Cough	
-1	—	—	—
1-	—	—	—
2-	3	—	3
3-	3	—	3
4-	3	—	3
5-	1	2	3
10-	—	—	—
15-	—	—	—
20-	—	—	—
35-	—	—	—
45-	—	—	—
65-	—	—	—
Admitted to Hospital	—	—	—
Deaths	—	—	—
Total ...	10	2	12

TUBERCULOSIS TABLE

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respira- tory		Non-res- piratory		Respira- tory		Non-res- piratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	I	—	—	—	—	—	—
65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	I	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

The number of tuberculous patients on the register at the year end were :—

Respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Non-respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	...	I

Total 10

One new case of respiratory tuberculosis was notified during the year.

HOUSING.

Housing Acts, 1936 and 1949.

There are 538 inhabited houses in the Borough and an average of 3.1 persons per house. Some over-crowding exists in the poorer houses, two new cases having arisen during the year. The housing survey was continued during the year and a programme to deal with 24 unfit houses was prepared.

Your requirements for new houses are about 70 and it is hoped that advantage will be taken of the financial grants available under the Housing Act, 1949, to recondition some of the older premises. Work on two improvement grant schemes was completed during the year.

Progress at the year end on your Scattergate Estate was that 26 houses were completed and 6 were under construction. The site will finally provide for 100 houses.

The method adopted for the selection of tenants of Council houses is one which combines the "points" scheme and personal selection. Each applicant completes a form and is awarded points from which a short list is compiled, and from this the personal selection is made.

The property owned by the Council included 59 dwelling houses exclusive of those in course of erection. Maintenance work is normally performed by local contractors.

Typical pre-war Council houses have a rateable value of £12 and the limits of the rent scales are 11/6d. to 13/6d. per week, with an average of 11/8d., exclusive of rates. Your post-war houses have a rateable value of £18 and the rents are 18/6d. per week exclusive of rates.

Verminous Houses.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 83-85.

The average standard of cleanliness is high and no action was necessary during the year.

Nuisances re Dwellings.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 91-100.

Informal action was taken in 21 cases. No statutory notices were served.

Dangerous Buildings.

Public Health Act, 1936. Section 58.

No cases were dealt with during the year.

Tents, Vans, Sheds and Movable Dwellings.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 268-269.

There is no licensed camping site in the Borough and one individual camping licence was in force during the year. Unlicensed camping sites are limited to occasional use only, intermittent camping takes place along the banks of the River Eden during the fishing season and is generally not objectionable.

Camping for periods of not more than four days each occurs twice a year by the staff of travelling fairgrounds and shows which park and operate in the Butts, where public conveniences for both sexes serve the sanitary requirements.

A more serious nuisance occurs during the June Fair, which lasts approximately five days. Camping on the Roman Road adjacent to Gallows Hill and on the Longmarton Road is done on a very large scale. Tents, motor trailers, and horse-drawn caravans assemble in hundreds along the roadsides, and the occupants use the fields and hedgerows for all sanitary purposes, which leave after their departure a foul and polluted area. A Committee was formed to examine the possibility of moving the campers off the roads on to the Gallows Hill and a provisional scheme was made to provide an access roadway and temporary latrines with chemical closets, and a proper water supply. Meanwhile the nuisance must be endured.

WATER.

The public water supply is adequate in quantity and probably satisfactory in quality. The result of laboratory examination of water is set out in Appendix "A" from samples taken during the year.

The source of the supply is at the foot of the Pennines from two natural springs at Bank Wood in the Parish of Hilton. These springs arise near the junction of St. Bees sandstone and the red shale strata and apparently have a deep source. Their yield is remarkably constant throughout the year.

There is some risk of surface drainage contamination which needs constant observation, and I am not very happy about the presence of the military works which are immediately uphill from the source. Although the dangerous latrine has been dismantled there remains the risk of the soldiers polluting the ground around the artillery observation tower.

The water is quite soft, having only seven degrees of hardness, and is suitable for all domestic purposes. The storage capacity of the covered and ventilated reservoir is approximately 60,000 gallons, with top and bottom levels of 642.51 feet and 637.00 feet above Ordnance Datum. The site is enclosed and protected by a stone perimeter wall. The water is untreated.

The distribution mains are cast-iron with ball hydrants now of considerable age. As safeguards against contamination the town water is sampled at monthly intervals.

518 out of the 538 houses in the Borough have water laid on, and about twenty are still served by old fashioned standpipes. During the year indoor supplies have been provided in 4 houses and notice is still outstanding on 1 house to secure conversion.

The average daily consumption of water from the public mains is 98,000 gallons which is equivalent to 54 gallons per head per day. This relatively high figure is due in part to waste.

Although the supply is adequate in quantity the level of the head works makes the pressure in the higher parts of the Borough rather poor. If development of this high land is contemplated in the future it will be necessary to consider boosting the supply.

SEWERAGE

Public Health Act, 1936, Sections 14, 15, 47 and 87.

The Borough is well equipped with water closets, 530 out of a total of 538 have either one or more, although a number of houses share a common convenience with neighbours. There are 8 privies on outlying farms which are not near the sewerage system. The majority of the closets are connected to the main sewer, only 10 being served by cesspits or septic tanks.

Public conveniences are situated at three points and the town is now well served.

The sewerage mains are mostly dual purpose, taking both surface water and foul drainage. Many of the old drains are of bastard size and very often laid with open joints. Many of these defects have been remedied during excavations for other purposes. A survey has been made and gradual replacement will be effected. The main sewer crosses the river near the Butts by an inverted siphon and thence flows through a brick-lined tunnel for 440 yards under Holme Wood to the river bank at St. Nicholas Wood, whence it is piped for the remaining 320 yards to the disposal plant.

The sewerage plant consists of two alternatively operating precipitation tanks from which the overflow passes in a main earthenware feeder for broad irrigation over about four acres of land alongside the river bank. The run off is piped into the main outfall for discharge into the Eden.

The plant is obsolete in design and has functioned very indifferently in recent years. However, during 1955, your Council spent some £700 on improvements. The main feeder pipes were replaced, the banking and land filtration beds were rebuilt; two extra beds and additional outfall drains were provided, and the whole area was fenced against stock. Those improvements and repairs will help to tide over.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Public Health Act, 1936, Sections 72, 76 and 77.

Refuse is collected from the whole of the area of the Borough of Appleby by Council employees with the use of a dual purpose vehicle.

Disposal of refuse is by controlled tipping at Gallows Hill. The tip is fenced in and treated against vermin. The salvage of waste paper is not done as it is uneconomical.

Street cleansing is carried out systematically twice weekly in the town centre and as often as necessary on the district and county roads. The public conveniences are cleansed and disinfected by a part-time caretaker.

The average annual volume of refuse is estimated as 1,500 cubic yards.

FOOD AND DRUGS.

Under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and the Orders and Regulations made thereunder, the Borough has the duty of carrying out specific responsibilities in the registration of certain food premises, in the supervision of milk and dairies, and in the wide field of protection of its citizens from food-borne diseases. The County Council are responsible for detecting the adulteration of foodstuffs and the supervision of the sale of drugs.

Precautions against Contamination of Food.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 13.

Periodical inspection of food premises has been carried out under Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and informal action taken where necessary. Proposals have been made for raising the standard of cleanliness and general hygiene in these places. I am confident that traders are anxious to achieve a very high level of hygiene in their premises.

Bye-laws for securing cleanliness in food handling came into operation during 1951 and it is hoped that their educative effect, rather than their penal provisions, will be valuable to both the trade and the public.

One formal caution was served on the owners of a grocery and provision stores which was found to be in a discreditable state.

Registration of Ice-cream Premises.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 14.

Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1947.

Under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, there are two registrations for the manufacture and sale of ice-cream and seven registrations for storage and sale only.

A code of requirements for ice-cream traders was formulated for their guidance in 1949.

Registration of Prepared Meat Premises.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 14.

At the year end registration of sausage manufactories and potted, preserved and pressed meat, and pickled food preparing premises under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 were approved in respect of 2 premises.

Registration of Dairies and Dairymen.

Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949.

Since October 1949 your Council has been responsible for the supervision of milk distributors and dairies which are not dairy farms. Your registrations at the end of 1955 were:—

Distributors	...	...	1
Dairies	...	...	3

Cleanliness of Retail Milk Supplies and Tuberculous Milk.

Food and Drugs Act, 1936, Section 68.

Results of sampling for cleanliness and keeping quality were as follows :—

Ungraded Milks :—

Methylene Blue—Satisfactory 2, Unsatisfactory 2.

T.T. Milks :—

Methylene Blue—Satisfactory 5, Unsatisfactory 1.

Five samples were submitted for biological examination for tuberculosis but all were reported to be negative.

Milk-borne Diseases.

No epidemics of milk-borne disease occurred during the year, and therefore no action was required to stop any milk supplies or restrict the activities of milk handlers under Part VII of the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949.

Designated Milks.

Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 1949.

Your Council is responsible for the granting of dealers' and supplementary annual licences for the sale of tuberculin tested and accredited milks.

Such licences in force during 1955 were :—

Dealers' licences (Form B) ...	...	...	2
Supplementary Licence (Form D) ...	...	...	1

Slaughterhouse and Knackers' Yards.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Sections 57-61.

Two slaughterhouses are licensed by the Borough Council and were brought into active use again in July 1948 after the removal of war-time control of the meat trade.

836 animals were slaughtered during the year, and most of these were inspected by the department. All the beasts and pigs, and about 99 per cent. of the sheep were so inspected; most of the animals were of high quality. No carcases were rejected, and only a few organs were found to be unfit for human consumption. I cannot emphasise too strongly the value of meat inspection and the importance of ensuring that all carcases are inspected before sale to the public.

CONDEMNATION OF MEAT AT THE ABATTOIR

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 10.

The following is a summary of the carcasses inspected and condemned in whole or in part :—

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	120	4	667	41
Number inspected	120	4	658	41
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	...	—	—	—	—
Carcase of which some part of organ was condemned	...	—	—	—	—
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	14	—	—	—
<i>Tuberculosis only</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	...	—	—	—	—
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	...	—	—	—	—
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis	—	—	—	2.4
<i>Cysticercosis</i>					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	...	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	...	—	—	—	—

Condemnation of Foodstuffs.*Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Sections 10-18.*

The following foodstuffs were condemned during the year as unfit for human consumption :—

- 1 sheep's lung.
- 1 pig's head.
- 14 beasts' livers.
- 11 sheeps' livers.
- 1 tin luncheon meat.

GENERAL SANITARY INSPECTION.

Since the appointment in 1949 of your part-time Sanitary Inspector there has been a very welcome improvement in making good the long-standing arrears as well as maintaining the day-to-day responsibilities of the Council in their public health function.

The six sessions, or notional half-days, per week devoted to Sanitary Inspection seem satisfactory. Various inspections have been carried out beyond those detailed in the special sections of this Report.

The maintenance of a reasonable standard of repair in houses has been difficult owing to the shortage of building labour for small jobbing work.

Offensive Trades.*Public Health Act, 1936, Section 107.*

There are no offensive trades within the meaning of the Act carried on in the Borough.

Factories.*Factories Act, 1937.*

There were three factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Factories Act, 1937, are the responsibility of the Borough Council for enforcement and 14 in which Section 7 is enforced. 27 inspections were made and in no case was it necessary to issue a written notice.

No prosecutions were required. There were no basement bakehouses.

One defect was remedied. No references were received from H.M. Inspector and none were made to him.

Inspections.

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of		
		Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	3	6	—	—
Factories not included in (1), in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	14	21	—	—
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	17	27	—	—

Cases in which Defects were Found.

Particulars.	Number of cases in which Defects were found.				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Reme- died.	To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.5) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	1	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	1	—	—	—

National Assistance Act, 1948.

No action was required under Section 47 for the removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention.

Shops Act, 1950.

These duties have been periodically carried out.

Common Lodging Houses.*Public Health Act, 1938. Part II.*

There were no common lodging houses within the Borough.

Rent Restriction Acts.

No applications for certificates of disrepair were received under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.

Smoke Abatement.*Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 101-106.*

There were no cases for action during the year.

Pests.*Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.*

Rat poisoning treatments have been given in the sewers and the refuse tip during the year. Inspection of other premises has been made when required and the occupiers given advice.

Laboratory Services.*Public Health Act, 1936. Section 196.*

Satisfactory laboratory facilities were available both at Carlisle and Kendal for all public health purposes. During 1947 a new scheme was inaugurated by the Public Health Laboratory Service for the performance of all laboratory examinations of a preventive and epidemiological nature, free of charge, to the Local Authority and the patient. This should do much to encourage the freer use of modern technical diagnostic methods by general practitioners and by your Health Department.

Bye-laws.

The Bye-laws in force on matters relating to public health were:—

Building Bye-laws.

Food Handling.

New Legislation.

No new legislation came into force during the year.

APPENDIX "A."

LABORATORY EXAMINATION OF THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY.

Nature of Test.	Standards Max.	Head Works.	Crotty Reservoir.	Town's Main.
Pr. Coli 37° ...	3-10	0	0	0
Faecal coli-strep. ...	0	—	—	—
Character ...	—	Clear	Clear	Clear
Reaction	—	6.7	6.9	6.8
Ammonical Nitrogen ...	.041	.003	.021	.018
Albuminoid Nitrogen ...	.066	.037	.034	.02
Dissolved Solids ...	1000	100	150	68
Hardness { Total ...	300	76	80	58
	Carbonate ...	45	43	13
	Non Carb. ...	31	37	45
Chlorides	30	10	10	9.0
Nitrates	1.0	1.220	1.340	—
Nitrites	—	—	—	—
O.2 Absorbed	1.0	.18	.16	.04
Heavy Metals	0	0	0	—
Rainfall 24 hrs. ...	—	Nil	Nil	Snow
Date Sampled ...	—	25/3/49	25/3/49	15/2/55
Laboratory ...	—	Darlington	Darlington	Darlington

Chemical Analyses expressed in parts per million.

